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WESTERN NEBRASKA

AND THE

EXPERIENCES

OF ITS

ACTUAL SETTLERS.

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WESTERN NEBRASKA AND ITS CROPS.

The object of these papers will be to say something about homes in Western Nebraska, the facilities for obtaining them, the manner and profits of grain growing and stock raising, the value of our great native meadows for stock breeding and dairying, the growth of forests and orchards, the facilities of markets, and other matters of interest to those seeking homes in the west. All this information has been obtained from personal interviews with farmers at their homes, the intention being to present solid facts from the experience of practical and successful men. The section visited is the Platte Valley, along the line of the Union Pacific Railway, and for twenty miles each side, commencing 100 miles west of the Missouri River and extending 150 miles, or beyond the 100th meridian. Till recently this has been called desert land, but now, as these statements attest, it is proved to be rich in all the elements necessary for most successful and profitable farming. This brings in a few years to the poorest homesteader, who commenced with nothing but a stout heart and willing hands, all the comforts of life, and, before he is worn out with toil, that enjoyment of well earned *rest* which all hope to attain.

PROFITS OF WHEAT CULTURE.

Last harvest time the land commissioner of the U. P. railway sent out to the wheat fields of Nebraska to ascertain where were the wheat fields of the State. The result indicated that they were in the western and northwestern counties, some of which give an average of 16 to 20 bushels. The highest being 27 bushels in a field of Buffalo county, while many fields yielded over 20 bushels to the acre. The failure of the crops in some of the great wheat growing States like Illinois and Michigan, brings up the inquiry: Where are the wheat lands of the continent? And taking up the *Mark Lane Express* and glancing over its reports, we cannot help but ask: Where are the wheat fields of the world, and from whence will come the daily loaf? The food which will sustain the labor of the country at the least expense, and still furnish the necessary food power is a great item to-day. We can now estimate what relation there is between forces and food, and the

demands of labor on the food supply. The question is: What will furnish the greatest amount of ability to work?

Here comes in the quality of the wheat from which we get the great indispensable, bread. Farmers, we cannot help saying, are looking for quantity in their grain crops, and while they seek to improv the breed in their hogs and cattle, don't stop to think that their grain needs the same attention. Minnesota has a great flour trade, both at home and abroad, because attention has been paid to growing wheat which produces the best flour that possesses the most gluten. A gentleman who was here a few days ago, who came with letters to Secretary Blaine, from Hungary, in Europe, a great wheat growing region, had been north in Dakota, Minnesota and Manitoba, and furnishes information in regard to the quality of wheat, and says that the samples he took from the Land Department of the Union Pacific are identical with some of those of the north. He had made careful analysis of wheat from different parts of the United States, with the following results in regard to the amount of gluten. The whole goes to show that the wheat lands are west and northwest, and that Nebraska has a great share of them. The figures are: Oregon, 36 per cent.; California, 19; Indiana, 31; Tennessee, 23; Delaware, 14; Connecticut, 32; Manitoba, 45; Minnesota, 46; Dakota, 53. The samples of wheat shown from Kearney county at the State fair is identical with the Dakota wheat. A hard wheat has the most gluten, and hence more value for food. The Union Pacific Land Department has been interested in a change of seed, and has on exhibition some fine samples. Some of these were sent by Mr. Hollingshead, formerly of Pawnee county, in this State, now of Fargo Dakota. Growers of wheat should give this matter attention and consider whether it is not advisable to cultivate these varieties which yield so much food. There is no need of the complaint of crops running out. There are interests which pay largely in the river counties aside from wheat growing, but the country one hundred miles from Omaha and westward should give attention to wheat growing. The success of the wheat crop this year in Buffalo, Phelps, Dawson and Kearney counties and those adjoining has answered the question as to where are the wheat fields of Nebraska. The writer could mention the names of dozens of farmers in these counties who have sold five and six thousand bushels of wheat of this year's crop.

Europe looks westward for bread and meat. Nebraska will furnish a share, and there is no better location for those who are seeking cheap lands to engage in producing food which the world wants.

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JUN 20 1908

BUFFALO COUNTY.

J. A. Herron, of Kearney, commenced four years ago on a homestead, all his capital being four horses and a plow. Had previously been a merchant, and unsuccessful; now seems to have found the business to which he has given both thought and labor, and found success.

Last year he sold 6,000 bushels of wheat. The crop of 1881 consists of 480 acres of wheat, 120 of corn, 60 of barley, 20 of millet and 160 of flax in a solid body. The latter crop he considers one of good profit, and will cause the erection of numerous mills throughout the State. Last year he sold 1200 bushels to the mill at Omaha, at $1 per bushel. He sows three varieties of wheat in the order of their ripening, White Italian, Scotch Fife and Grass wheat; plows deep in the fall, sows early 1½ to 2 bushels to the acre. In harvesting uses a header which cuts twenty-five acres a day. He says if a man comes west with capital to go into business he will find nothing more profitable than growing small grain; believes it better than corn, as the work is all done by machinery.

The expense this year for putting in these crops has been the labor of himself and two men hired by the month, and two men hired during harvest. Has now ten head of horses, and agricultural machinery valued at $1,200, all from the profits of grain growing.

David Anderson, formerly sheriff of this county, lives four miles west of Kearney, on a farm of two hundred and forty acres, and commenced farming five years ago, his capital being one yoke of oxen This year raised 100 acres of wheat, 60 being Italian, 16 Scotch Fife and 24 acres grass wheat; the yield was 22 bushels per acre. He has also 110 acres of corn, and 3½ acres of Timothy, which gave a heavy crop, some heads measuring ten inches. This was cut with a header to save the seed, and the straw with a mower for hay. Is satisfied timothy will do well, and will sow all his seed. Believes in combining stock growing with farming, and has 83 head of cattle and 8 horses. A grove of trees around a white farm-house adds to the beauty and comfort of the place, and an orchard is to be planted at an early day.

His present crop shows good tillage, which he considers most important, and is a strong advocate of wheat growing for profit, as he has had success, and believes here are the wheat lands of Nebraska.

J. D. Seaman, of Kearney, commenced growing wheat in 1874, and has had each year since from 25 to 250 acres. During that time the lowest yield has been 16⅔, and the highest 28 bushels per acre. The

lowest price was 72 cents; price Oct. 1, 1881, $1.08. The first crop will pay more than the expense of breaking; after that and hiring all the work done he has raised wheat for 40 cents per bushel. To succeed he says plow deep in the fall, and thus be ready for early seeding, a most important point. Use plenty of the best seed that can be obtained, two bushels to the acre is not too much. Don't try to grow two crops at the same time, one of which is weeds; believes in a frequent change of seed if only from the highlands to the valley; but has found success in getting seed from abroad, and prefers that grown farther north.

Geo. Norris, of Kearney, came to this county from Iowa, in 1872, without capital and $3,000 in debt. Has now 200 acres in farm and pasturage. Is engaged in the milk business in connection with farming. Has 130 head of cattle, 50 of which are milch cows. Finds that stock combined with grain growing insures the most profit to the farmer. Has eleven head of horses and mules. The crop of this year consists of 90 acres of Italian and grass wheat, 70 of corn, 16 of barley, 20 of oats, and 16 of millet, and all have done well. The above shows what can be done by a man of energy in a very few years. The old debts of $3,000 have been paid, and now does not owe a dollar.

Lowenstein Brothers, Kearney P. O. These men came here three years ago with seven other German families from Iowa, and located five miles north of Kearney, on railroad land. They had some capital to start with, and have received a good return for their labor and investment. This year have 160 acres of wheat, 75 of corn, 25 of millet, 15 of oats and 8 of barley. The varieties of wheat are Lost Nation, Mammoth and grass wheat. Sowed this year on fall plowing 1½ bushels to the acre broadcast. Harvests with a twine self-binder, which cuts 14 acres per day, and does good work.

They believe in the profit of combining stock raising with farming. Have 69 head of cattle and 13 horses. Both live in good white farm houses with barns and granaries.

Mr. Anderson, three miles east of Kearney, commenced three years ago with small capital, has now 125 acres improved, good farmhouse, barn and granary, with a grove and young orchard started, and all the improvements, made from the profits of grain growing.

C. R. and Abner Stimson, of Kearney, Buffalo county, have each a homestead of one hundred and eighty acres, with good farm houses and groves about them; each have eighty acres under cultivation. The first year C. R. did not have even a team, now he has seven head of horses and all necessary agricultural machinery. He believes in the benefit of summer fallowing. These two men commenced four years

ago with nothing but their unbroken homesteads. Another example of the profits of wheat-growing.

D. M. Fulmer, of Gibbon, illustrates what a man can do who comes here with capital. Last year he came here from Onondago County, New York, and bought two adjoining quarter sections, improved, each having a good story and a half house. The whole cost $3,800. Besides his own he is cultivating an adjoining farm for another New York man who will come here this fall. The present crop is 250 acres of wheat; varieties, Early Hamburg and Grass; 70 acres of corn, 10 of oats and 12 of potatoes; varieties being Early Rose, Early Vermont and Buckeye; 6 acres of corn, which he feeds to his horses green and finds it the best feed during summer and fall work. He has one field with a good stand of timothy and clover and will sow 40 acres more. In regard to preparation of the soil he said: "Give me fall plowing 6 to 8 inches, at least, and this work will begin the day the wheat is off and not stop till 200 acres are turned over. By this means I can commence seeding as soon as 6 inches of frost is out of the ground, for early sowing and planting is most important. Sowed wheat and oats this year in April, which was afterward covered with snow. By all means be liberal with seed; a great mistake is made in this. The soil here is richer than the East, and in all respects the crop is benefitted by standing thick; the harvest will show the result." He prefers drilling, the grain being put in an even depth, and if the ground is plowed deep the roots strike down and find a deposit of moisture furnished by the spring rains for use during dry time. Wheat, like grass, makes its strong root growth during the cool weather of spring, the influence of succeeding warmth. Mr. F. showed the difference between fall and spring plowing. A strip in a field left last fall and plowed in the spring showed a much lighter crop of grain and plenty of weeds, while the fall plowing was clean. He uses a header for harvesting, but the crop, he says, must be entirely free of weeds or there is danger of the grain spoiling in the stack. This year he has built an extensive barn with sheds, and he remarked, "I am going to keep just as much stock as I can shelter, notwithstanding I am surrounded by a thick grove." This year, from the planting of his predecessor, he has had a good crop of currants and grooseberries, and is satisfied that this will be a good country for profitable fruit growing. The above shows what can be done in Western Nebraska by a thinking man of energy who comes here forehanded. The result of this year's wheat crop will pay for the original investment, while the corn, oats, etc.,

will pay for all the improvements, expenses of living and labor, and leave a margin.

WHAT CAN BE DONE.

In looking for the man who came here without a nickel and succeeded by growing wheat, the writer found a number near Kearney, Nebraska, but will instance the case of L. D. Brigham, who lives on the railroad three miles from town. A little over six years ago, for want of money to pay his fare, he left the train at Columbus and walked a hundred miles, arriving here without money to buy a meal, and a total stranger. A man who was working at the carpenter's trade took him, and they "bached" it during the winter. Mr. Brigham was a good blacksmith, and through his friend got credit for some tools and lumber for a small shop. Work flowed in, he took up a claim, and put up a cabin. Mrs. Brigham, in the meantime, raised money to come out, and while he worked at his trade in town, she lived on the claim to hold it, the carpenter's wife also helping along in the same way. I have heard those two men laugh together at those days, and give their brave wives the credit justly due them.

Five years ago Mr. B. commenced farming, and everything about him shows the skilled farmer. He has 417 acres, all but fifty improved. A good white farmhouse, furnished in a style not common with many of eastern farmers; $1,200 invested in agricultural implements and machinery, eleven horses, five cows, thirty horses and young stock.

Besides his own land, he is farming some outside. This year's crops are in No. 1 condition, promising a great harvest, and consist of 450 acres of wheat. What I saw ought to yield twenty bushels to the acre, 175 acres of corn, twenty of oats, twenty of barley, and twenty of flax. Last year he sold 5,150 bushels of wheat. It was a dry year, but an average of 14½ bushels per acre. The kinds this year are Italian, Scotch Fife, and Grass wheat. He sows 1¾ bushels to the acre broadcast, believes in deep fall plowing and early sowing. This year sowed March 27th, last year February 27th. The above is an emphatic answer to the question does it pay to grow wheat in Nebraska. Tho best judge of property has told me that he could step out of the place to-day with $12,000 and reserve the present crop.

PHELPS COUNTY.

L. Hallgreen, Phelps Center, began five years ago and now has 320 acres under cultivation. Three years ago he had 200 acres of broom corn, which has always been a paying crop. This year has 70. His

neighbors, J. M. Dahlstrom and John Johnson, have each forty acres, and almost every farmer ten to twenty-five. Five years ago there were only sixteen families in this county, which now has a population of 3,000. Three-fifths of the farmers are Swedes, but there has been an influx of moneyed farmers this year from Wisconsin mostly, who are doing excellent work. Most of these Swedish families came here destitute, who now are in comfortable circumstances, with good houses, teams, stock, and an abundant crop.

H. Duquene came here in 1874, and took a timber claim and a homestead. Had a team, but went in debt for a plow. The last cent of money was used to pay for a sack of flour. For the result of six years farming, he has all his homestead in cultivation, and sixty acres of timber claim, forty acres of which is planted in timber cottonwoods, box elder, locust and black walnut. The cottonwoods will measure fifteen inches, black locust the same size. All the trees have made a good growth, and have received cultivation like any other crop. He thinks planting timber most important for protection to crops and stock, and very soon furnishing an abundant supply of fuel. He has now five horses and four mules, and has this year turned off forty-five head of cattle. Is very much in favor of mixed husbandry. Has sixty acres fenced for pasture, and says the most money can be realized from grain growing, by feeding it on the farm. Prefers ground feed in all cases, and a frequent change. Save all the straw, allowing the stock to run to it, thereby turning it into manure, which every farm needs, notwithstanding the natural richness of the soil. Sheep growing has proved very successful, and is largely on the increase.

In September he sowed fifty acres of rye which furnishes excellent pasturage after the native grasses are killed by frost; butter made from it is as rich and yellow as that from grass in June.

He urges fall plowing for all crops, and instances a field which gave forty-two bushels of oats to the acre; while another, spring-plowed, gave nothing but short straw. Present price of oats forty-five cents and corn fifty cents, now being sold to Kansas farmers who suffered from drought the past season.

The varieties of wheat he prefers are Australian and Scotch Fife, sowing one and one-fourth bushels per acre ; thinks that amount of seed sufficient as the plants stool much more than in the eastern states; has counted thirty-seven stalks from a single seed. By fall plowing the ground is more compact, not so open to allow of drying out. Besides, it allows seeding as soon as the frost is out, insuring a good growth before the heat and dry winds of summer. The

increase of hogs is very noticeable in the county, the cross of Poland China, with Berkshire being the breed most preferred, and furnishing a hog which will weigh 200 pounds at six months old. He believes there is no better farming county in the state than Phelps county, and among other crops, says broom corn has been a very profitable one.

J. P. Abrahamson walked into Phelps county three years ago without a cent. Commencing as a common laborer, he is now worth over $2,000.

C. C. Hansen took a homestead here in March, 1879, and hired a part of it broke by paying back in work. Has now five horses and necessary agricultural implements. His oat crop this year was sixty bushels to the acre, selling at 45c. From seven bushels of potatoes planted, he got a return of 200 bushels, which were sold at $1.00 per bushel. He says the demand for labor on farms, gives work at once for the new-comer and he soon earns a team and starts for himself.

Charles P. Carlson came to Phelps county in the fall of 1874. His wife remaining at work in Lincoln till the next year. His winter's work enabled him to buy a yoke of cattle, and his wife's earnings bought a cow. He took a homestead and timber claim, and has now 150 acres improved, a span of horses, two mules and three cows. This year his wheat crop amounted to 1,000 bushels. This is a striking case where a competence has been obtained in a short time by diligent labor and careful management. The same opportunity is open to-day.

A. Christensen, near Sacramento, in Phelps county, came there in 1876; his sole capital being a yoke of cattle. He took a homestead and a timber claim, and now on the homestead has 100 acres in cultivation and his timber claim doing well; has a span each of mules and horses and all needed implements. Thrashed 800 bushels of wheat and a good crop of rye. This case is a sample of a large number in this county, who have worked from nothing by persistent energy, until they reach the high road to competence, wealth and rest in the later days of life.

J. D. Moore, of Hall county, has forty acres of Canada Red and Rio Grande wheat, which yield twenty bushels per acre, and sold for $1.09. As the work was all done by machinery, he says it pays to grow wheat. To show the condition of roads there he mentioned that he hauled 129 bushels to market in two loads, with two horses.

KEARNEY COUNTY.

John Nelson, who lives near Mirage Postoffice, has 320 acres, 200 of which are in cultivation, with substantial farm buildings, blacksmith shop, and a full line of agricultural machinery, from a threshing machine down. This year has 100 acres of wheat, 70 acres of good corn, besides rye and barley. For varieties of wheat he puts the Tea first, (which must be cut before it is too ripe, as it shells easily), the Italian next, and the grass third

He has had previously five crops with a yield of 8, 16, 20, 15 and 18 bushels, being an average of 15½ to the acre. He prefers drilling and has previously sown 1½ but, next year will use two bushels of seed to the acre. Where wheat is sown thick the heads, though smaller, are filled to the end, with lighter straw; when it is thin the heads spindle up with less grain. Fall plowing he considers essential to keep down the weeds, and seeding as soon as the frost is out. By this means a strong growth of root is secured during the cool spring months. He instanced the crops of this year: the early planted wheat was filled and commencing to ripen before the extreme hot weather; and the same with corn, which was hardening, while late planted would fall far short of a full crop. Farmers generally were doing better work, having found that a bushel of poor seed harrowed in among corn stalks would not produce a crop.

The price or harvesting he stated was $1.25 to $1.50 per acre, with a self-binder, cutting about 15 acres per day. One dollar per acre for cutting and stacking with a header, threshing 4 cents per bushel.

Near his house he has a thrifty grove of five acres, mostly cottonwood. This fall he will make a large addition of white ash. A wind-mill pumps an abundant supply of water, the stream running through the milk room, and thence to the cattle yards. It may be interesting to state that this farm with its fine improvements was started five years ago on a capital of *two-and-a-half* dollars.

Charles Erickson, near Mirage Postoffice, in Kearney County, commenced five years ago with a yoke of cattle bought on time, and a homestead of bare prairie. He has now 320 acres, this year's crop being 125 acres of wheat, 100 acres of corn, which is extra fine, and fifteen acres of rye. He proposes to fence in sixty acres for pasture and raise stock in proportion to the crops he has to feed them on. He has now a good start of cattle and fine young Poland-China hogs. Now more hogs are wanted to eat this big crop of corn, as it is cheaper to drive fat cattle and hogs to the nearest railway station than to haul

the grain, and the prices of the former are not so fluctuating and uncertain. As to varieties of wheat he puts White Italian first; next, tea, and grass wheat third. The latter has always been popular, the berry being small but weighing heavily. One objection to it is the slow growth in the spring, and it takes longer time to mature. He practices deep culture and early seeding, and approves of a frequent change of seed.

Thomas Boyer commenced farming here in 1875, on a homestead, with three horses and a wagon, and some provisons, with twenty-five cents in cash. He has now 800 acres of land: 225 acres improved, and sixty fenced for pasture. Has eight horses, twenty-four head of cattle and forty-seven hogs. Has sold this year 1,500 bushels of wheat, and over $200 worth of hogs. This year his oat crop averaged fifty bushels per acre; barley, forty-three, and some of his early wheat twenty-seven bushels per acre. He is a strong advocate of growing the coarse grains, fencing pasturage land and raising meat; that it pays better than anything else to combine grain and stock.

BROOM CORN.—A. J. Huxford, of Central City, Merrick Co., has raised broomcorn for seven years without the failure of a crop.

This year has had 30 acres. Ground prepared the same as for corn, planted with 2½ qts. of seed to the acre, May 15, cultivated twice—has planted as late as the 10th of June and had a good crop. Its foliage being heavier it soon shades the ground and endures drouth better than corn. The usual yield is one ton from three acres. Out of a lot of 7½ tons shipped there were only 600 lbs. of crooked corn. Has sheds for curing, and the brush has always ranked No. 1. Sold this year to a Chicago firm for $72.50, loaded on the cars. He has always found the crop profitable, and next year will put in 40 acres.

The estimated crop this year, as delivered at Kearney station, is for Phelps county, 600 tons, Kearny county sixty, and Gosper county fifty tons. The average is a ton from three acres, and the price is increasing with the yearly increasing demand. In 1880 the price was $65, while in Dec., 1881, the price paid has been as high as $115, which gives a return of over $38 per acre. This crop being planted closely in rows is often cultivated but once. The foliage shades the ground, and hence weeds do not grow. This year the crop has been handled without the need of sheds, but still for safety they should be built. Sheds can be made at small expense, all the lumber needed being posts and rafters, the grass, which is six to eight feet long on the low grounds, furnishes a material for roofing, which for durability will outlast twice the time of pine shingles. The population of Phelps

county, three-fifths of whom are Swedes, know well how to use their early experience in their own country in thatching roofs.

To show the western movement of agriculture in Nebraska, a letter from Mr. Shortill, of Sidney, 415 miles west of the Missouri river, tells what can be done on lands, which, to the traveler, would at first sight be condemned. He says Mr. Kreuger planted one pound of Early Rose potatoes, with a product of thirty-six pounds, which would be at the rate of 200 bushels per acre. He also sowed a half pound of oats, which produced over thirty pounds, the straw three feet high. Cabbage weighing twenty-five pounds, and potatoes two pounds. He has strawberries, gooseberries, currants and raspberries doing well.

Garden vegetables of all kinds have done well this year, only requiring a little irrigation, and Mr. S. says that this sample of the products of the Lodge Pole Valley, only shows what can be done in all the valleys of western Nebraska wherever there is water. The increase year by year of the rainfall, as it seems to move westward, brings into cultivation some of the best grain producing land of the west.

PLATTE COUNTY.

EGYPTIAN CORN.—Rev. J. C. Evans, of Duncan, in this county, has this year 7 acres of this new grain, which has qualities which will make it valuable for table food, for cattle and as a forage plant. The ground was prepared as for corn, and planted the first week in June, in hills two feet apart each way. A common corn planter was used, arranging the seed boxes so that 3 to 5 seeds were dropped at once. Sixty days after planting the large foliage covered the ground, and the corn was in head, standing 4 to 5 feet high. Planted at that time shows it had plenty of time to mature. Last year it withstood the unusual drought, yielded well. As to the quantity of forage, the amount he set down at 6 tons per acre. He noticed that the sheep, when they escaped, would pass the corn field to eat the Dourra. Some of the seed ground into meal and made in bread in the same manner as corn meal was decidedly superior. The white variety boiled was in every way equal to rice. The large amount grown to the acre will furnish cheap food for fattening cattle, combined with ground corn, oats, etc.

A NEBRASKA TIMBER CLAIM.

KEARNEY, NEB., July 19, 1881.— H. Roe says: I filed on the claim in March, 1874, and had forty acres broken in June of same year. 1875 I prepared ten acres of it for trees and tree seeds by plow-

ing and harrowing it, and I planted about 7,000 seedling cottonwoods, which are now thirty and thirty-five feet high, with a circumference of twenty to thirty inches; also one-half bushel box elder seed, from which there are in places dense masses of trees fifteen to twenty feet high. They have borne seed now three years, and I expect forty bushels of seed can be gathered from those trees this year.

I have been planting trees and tree seed on the claim every year since 1875 until 1880. Some years they have done poorly and in others they have done well. I have planted soft maple, white ash, cottonwood, box elder, a few gray willows, some locust and 40 bushels of black walnuts. I have probably 45,000 trees of all kinds growing, of all sizes up to thirty feet high and thirty inches in circumference. There will certainly be enough to cut out from now to keep two or three families in wood if judiciously done. I can not say as to the profitableness of raising timber in Nebraska, but in this case I get the land by planting the trees, and I have the trees, which, I presume, with the land, will be worth two or three times what it has cost me to improve the claim and set the timber, and I have hired all my work done.

PROFITS OF TIMBER GROWING.

An eastern man landing in a prairie country says at once, "why you have no timber here;" but if one of them had been with the writer yesterday he would have had a chance to be lost in the woods, and that too, in a tract of cultivated timber in Douglas county. Mr. John Hallenback, who has one of the finest farms in this section, had the forethought to commence planting a forest in 1861, and now has 160 acres of timber. Every acre of this land is worth more to-day than if it had cropped with grain for the crop of timber would sell for more in market.

The first planting was the pioneer tree of the west, cottonwood, then soft maples, walnuts and ash. Mr. H. said: "I have sold 150 cords of wood, besides every day neighbors are hauling away loads of poles." A tract of forty acres of walnuts, which the writer had not seen for ten years, is the most valuable. Nuts were planted in 1864 where the trees now stand, and among them young cottonwoods which have, as French growers say, answered as nurses to raise up the tree until it has body. All these trees have a young saw-log twelve to fifteen feet high, now thirty-four inches in circumference one foot rom the ground. The great demand for walnut timber for expor and what it will be ten years from to-day, tells the value of these 25,-

000 trees. The maples and cottonwoods, as fast as cut away, renew their growth with new, strong shoots. A fine plantation of ash, some which measured thirty inches, will furnish the best or manufacturing timber. This growth of timber tells what can be done on prairie farms in producing fuel and protection. We have to agree that corn, pork and cattle feeding belongs to eastern Nebraska. One-third of a farm to corn, and the other two-thirds to timber and pasturage. The protection afforded by the trees will largely increase the corn yield and less feed will be needed for the stock. In this tract of timber is an acre enclosed where Mr. B. is feeding a hundred head of cattle and one hundred and fifty Berkshire hogs. One hundred of the latter are brood sows. Western Nebraska with its great corn crop is asking for young hogs—hence the profit of growing them here with a sure maaket in view. One look at that solid quarter section of forest is sufficient to inspire any man with the belief that timber can be grown here with success and great profit.

GROWTH OF TIMBER.

A row of cottonwoods planted around a block in Omaha, in 1861, would now furnish forty saw logs, some of the trees measuring seven and a-half feet. A soft maple planted in 1864, now measures over six feet. Some white pines in a tract of two acres, within sight of Omaha, measures thirty inches at sixteen years old.

TIMBER.—C. H. Lee, Silver Creek, Merrick Co. Cottonwood 9 years, 1 foot above the ground (several specimens) 3 feet 7 inches.

Soft Maple, 9 years, 2 feet 2 inches.

Wm. Stolly, Grand Island, Hall Co. Cottonwood, 18 years, 7 feet 1 inch, 70 feet high.

Green Ash, 15 years, 2 feet 6 inches.

White Ash, 6 years, 16 inches.

Honey Locusts, 5 years, 20 inches.

American Larch, 5 years, 20 inches.

Black Cherry (from seed) 4 years, 9 inches, 15 feet high.

Black Walnut, 16 years, 2 feet 6 inches.

White Elm, 6 years, 14 inches.

NEBRASKA HAY.—An examination of the statistics of the agricultural department will show that hay is one of the most prominent crops in the United States, and this estimate is largely made from the product of grass grown on high priced lands. It is a great advantage to the poorest settler who locates on Nebraska lands to find an abundance of feed for his stock at the cost of cutting. The richness of

these grasses, it is claimed, cannot be surpassed by the tame varieties. Horses here never have the heaves, and those coming here are soon cured after feeding on this hay. The great and increasing demand from the mountain region will always render this a profitable crop in western Nebraska. A visit to the hay presses of Hon. J. T. Clarkson, President of the State Board of Agriculture, located a short distance from the depot at this place, (Schuyler) showed a business that is surprising.

Here thirty-five men and fifteen teams are employed baling and shipping in cars, the market being mostly at Denver, from which point it is shipped to the mountain towns as far as Leadville, and also to towns along the main line of the Union Pacific. The baling house is a substantial pine building, 40x80, and 16 feet high. The hay is hauled from the stacks and delivered on a floor level with the top of the baling machines, two of which stand in the center of the building. It requires two men to feed each machine, and a hundred pound bale of fresh green hay is rolled out of the door every minute. Three wagons are kept busy hauling it to the cars. A steam engine in a separate building supplies the power. Seven thousand tons were shipped during the past eighteen months. During the present rush the buildings are lighted with lanterns at night and the machinery runs till 10 o'clock. Forty tons a day is the capacity. At intervals along the track are four buildings for storage, 40x80 feet, perfectly tight, with good shingle roof and tight floors. Here, when cars are short, the hay is stored and a supply kept on hand, so that an order from any part of the country can be filled in a few hours notice. Entering one of the buildings the air is as fragrant as "new mown hay" of Lubin's best, from tier on tier of bales piled thirty feet high. A car load was shipped to-day, Oct. 8, 1881, to a horse railway company in New Jersey, who wished to test the quality of western grass. Mr. Dillon, of North Platte, who is giving attention to horse breeding, says from his experience that horses raised there are superior in wind and endurance to those fed in the east on clover. This abundance of hay, which costs only the cutting, is one of the many advantages which Nebraska offers to settlers, and a most important one. The poorest homesteader has the benefit the first year. More stock can be kept and at a very trifling cost, than would be possible with tame hay, but to those who wish timothy, this year has demonstrated that it is a success where sown, on those very lands where the wild grass grows so abundantly. Each successive cutting renders the grass of finer quality and free from weeds. Hay has been put up this year, by

contract, as low as one dollar per ton. Mr. Clarkson has earned the title of the "Hay King of Nebraska," and opened up a market for a valuable product which nature furnishes without cost. The amount of money paid out for labor is no small benefit to that section of country.

CREAMERY.—Mr. C. H. Lee, of Silver Creek, Merrick County, realizes the great wealth which lies in our native grasses and has sold his store, doing a good business, to go into dairying, confident of success. His first shipment to Denver realized thirty-five cents, with a demand for all he could ship of such extra butter. The coming year he will enlarge his business by the addition of more milch cows. He remarked, it does not take a great capital at the start to go into the business of turning this grass into beef, mutton, butter, cheese and wool, and the demand for these articles is certain and increasing. To use up the skim milk he has a very fine lot of Poland-China hogs. One litter of nine pigs, six months old, will weigh 200 pounds each. In all breeding, he says, raise the standard up to the best. Butter made from our rich grasses cannot be excelled, and the facilities open for its production should attract the attention of eastern dairymen.

GRAPE CULTURE.—Wm. Stolly, of Grand Island, Hall Co., 150 miles west of the Missouri River, besides cultivating for market, has experimented largely and has the following varieties in bearing this year: Lady, Noah, Taylor, Elvira, Clinton, Cottage, Hartford, Cynthiana, Herman, Diana, North Carolina; Ives bearing heavy; Catawba a great crop. Concord, the standard grape, as everywhere does well; 600 of the 800 in his vineyard are of this kind. He has great success in grafting on wild roots. Delaware and Elvira 2 years grafted are an inch in diameter at the ground, and cover 80 square feet of trellis. Most of these passed through the hard winter of last year without protection. As wild grapes grow along all the streams the indication is sure that cultivated varieties will succeed in all parts of the state. With grapes selling at 4 cents per pound, $165 have been realized per acre.

H. Craig, of Washington county, has sold this year two and a-half tons of grapes from one and one-half acres of ground, and received five cents per pound net. These were mostly Concords, with some Marthas, Cottage, and a number of other varieties familiar to eastern growers. This is a return of $160 per acre. One thousand Concord vines, to the acre will cost $30 for the best, and our western demand is unlimited for the fruit.

ENSILAGE.—The preservation of green food for animals in winter has attracted much attention in the Eastern States, and an experiment with it here proved a perfect success. There would be as much propriety in using dried beans as the only vegetable at our daily meals, as to feed animals entirely on dried grass.

We think it essential to have a supply of canned corn, tomatoes, peas, fruits, etc., to be used as appetite suggests; why may not horses and cattle relish green food in winter?

When ensilage is properly made, a deep-walled and cemented cellar is used, called a silo, and into this chopped corn-stalks, or other green food, is closely packed and tightly covered until wanted in cold weather. Mr. A. D. George, of Gibbon, Buffalo county, made an experiment last year which was very satisfactory. An open, outdoor cellar was packed full of green cornstalks as they came from the field; boards were spread over it, and a thick covering of earth. This was opened in January, and found to have changed from a light to a dark green color. Horses, cattle and hogs ate it eagerly, and milch cows increased one-third in their milk. This year he has sown a field with corn, and intends to repeat the trial of last year on a larger scale, cutting up the stalks before packing. When we consider that 6 tons of corn, or 4 tons of millet can be grown on an acre, the cost of ensilage is very small compared with its value for winter food.

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